

Syllabus

MUS 361, Recording and Playback - Fall 2016

Nicholas Lambson, Instructor

Fridays 3:00-4:50

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Office hours will be announced to the class as soon as times are established. When announced, students should write this information in the space provided here:

Course description:

Instruction and application of audio recording and production techniques. Lectures will cover a wide range of topics related to the art and science of audio production, including sound, hearing, recording hardware, software, and both analog and digital audio mediums.

Industry-standard recording software, *Pro Tools*, will be used throughout the semester, and it is available for us in Music Department labs. Class demonstrations, homework assignments, and group activities will facilitate an understanding of the software. All student projects must be completed using this program.

Some class sessions will be spent recording various instruments or ensembles. These recording sessions will extend to small projects to be completed privately by the student, sometimes presented and discussed by the class. Students will also participate in a variety of audio-related events outside of class.

Required and recommended texts, readers, or other reading materials for this course include:

Required:

Pro Tools 12 (provided)

Personal file backup storage – portable HDD, thumb drive, cloud storage

Recordable media

Electronic materials:

- Assignments, lecture slides, important links, and other content are available on Moodle.
- Lecture slides will be available as Powerpoint documents. MS Office is available for student use in campus computer labs. Free alternatives include Google Docs, Open Office, and Polaris.

Recommended:

Modern Recording Techniques, Huber and Runstein

Pro Tools 12 Power!, Cook

Computer fluency is required. Basic Mac proficiency is recommended.

Some background in music is recommended.

Access to the Internet, Moodle, HSU email, and the campus computer labs. Keycard access will be granted by the instructor.

Access to the Music Department's "Student Folder"

Course Requirements:

Assignments: Audio assignments will include recording, editing, mixing, and audio processing as related to class topics. Written assignments are discussed below.

Midterm Project: This will demonstrate fluency with multi-track editing and basic audio processing via a creative project, which may be “performed” in class.

Final Project: This is a large-scale project, meant to demonstrate a semester worth of skills. Some project ideas will be provided, but students are encouraged to choose a project based on how they are likely to use recording technology in their lives.

Written Exam: This is a cumulative written exam, usually “take-home,” which will sum up all of the theory covered over the course of the semester.

Gear Project: Students will create specific recording and playback setups, itemizing the equipment needed. Guidelines will be given later in the semester.

Experience: Students can choose from several audio-related activities outside of class. These may include extra recording sessions, mic or speaker projects, or observation. More information will be distributed later in the semester.

Grading Information:

Written Assignments:

- 15% Written Exam
- 8% Experience
- 7% Gear Project

Audio Assignments:

- 5% First Audio Project
- 5% Guitar Editing
- 5% Piano Editing
- 15% Midterm Project
- 10% Drum Mixdown
- 15% Band Mixdown
- 15% Final Project

Subject to change with fair notice.

Graded material is calculated using a 100-point scale, which is converted to a letter grade at the end of the semester.

Final Exam Period: Friday, December 16th, 3-4:50pm
Alternate: Friday, December 16th, 12:40-2:30

Attendance: Regular attendance is essential for successful completion of this course. Students may miss two classes unexcused. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class, so please be on time. The third unexcused absence and/or tardy will result in the final grade being lowered one grade letter with no further penalties for successive absences after that (eg, a B+ becomes a C+). Some absences may be waived at the discretion of the instructor for medical issues, family emergencies, etc. Documentation may be required for serious issues. Specific assignments will be given each class session. It is the student's responsibility to keep up if a class has been missed.

Late Assignments: All late work is subject to a 10-point penalty per 24-hour period.

"Make-up" Exams: In-class exams, activities, and presentations cannot be made up without a serious or compelling reason and documentation may be required. If there is sufficient cause to arrange for a make up, arrangements must be made as far in advance as possible.

Music Department Computer Lab

Use of the lab is restricted to music majors and other students registered in certain courses. Do not give your key card to anyone else, or give anyone your passwords. The lab is a shared workspace, so please be courteous to other users, and leave your station clean and set up for the next user. A lab monitor is available during posted hours for technical problems only. Please make a note of these hours when established, and try to keep questions to these hours. For any other classwork related problems, contact me via email or come to office hours. Making appointments with me during my scheduled office hours is advisable.

Music Technology Lab – Room 109B

Use of the lab is restricted to students registered in certain courses. The equipment in this room may be used for any projects for the class, though projects requiring recording get priority. The Music Department Computer Lab can be used for basic editing and any other projects that do not require recording. The instructor will not regulate lab usage unless problems arise. With some assignments, students may work in pairs or small groups, but only with other students in the class. Any other individual wanting to enter that space must have instructor consent. No equipment may be removed from the 109 Tech Lab without consent. Unauthorized use or abuse of the equipment may result in revoking of privileges for one or more people. In severe cases, the university may seek financial restitution. This equipment is for everyone to use and share, so remember that your actions in this dedicated space affect everyone else. As a final note, students must be extremely careful with volume levels in this room; use headphones while classes and rehearsals occupy the 109 classroom. If the speakers absolutely must be used while a class is in session next door, PLEASE use keep the volume low; these speakers will give an accurate representation of your recording even at low levels. For more extended listening, nighttime use is required, and encouraged!

The 109 Classroom

Recording class students may use this space for recordings provided that there is no conflict with other classes or department related rehearsals; for that reason, as well as the fact that recording should be done in quiet environments, it will be best for you to do these projects at night.

Keycard Access

All students registered as music majors automatically receive access to the Music Department Computer Lab, practice rooms, and many classroom doors. Access to the 109B Tech Lab will require additional approval by the instructor. Students will need to make sure that they have access to all of the above spaces as soon as possible. The music department office has the required forms, and you can submit your signed forms there as well.

Handheld Recorder

The music department owns a small, portable handheld recorder, which students may want to use for recording projects. If you are interested in using it, you will need to sign it out from the music department office. Please take it for very short amounts of time, as there are other students who will be using it both in, and outside of our class. It uses removable media, so you will need to either use your own, or be sure to download your files before erasing them from the device.

This course explicitly contributes to students' acquisition of skills and knowledge relevant to University Learning Outcomes:

Music Department Program Student Learning Outcomes:

- 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to hear, identify, and work conceptually with the elements of music - rhythm, melody, harmony, and structure.
- 2: Students will demonstrate familiarity with, and in ability to perform a wide selection of musical literature representing principal eras, genres, and cultural sources.
- 3: Students will demonstrate ability and performing areas appropriate to the students needs, interests, and degree path.
- 4: Students will demonstrate effective English writing skills.

Humboldt State University Student Learning Outcomes:

HSU graduates will have demonstrated:

- Effective communication through written and oral modes.
- Critical and creative thinking skills in acquiring a broad base of knowledge and applying it to complex issues
- Competence in a major area of study.
- Appreciation for and understanding of an expanded world perspective by engaging respectfully with a diverse range of individuals, communities and viewpoints.

HSU graduates will be prepared to:

- Succeed in their chosen careers.
- Take responsibility for identifying personal goals and practicing lifelong learning.
- Pursue social justice, promote environmental responsibility, and improve economic conditions in their workplaces and communities.

Policies:

Academic honesty: Students are responsible for knowing policy regarding academic honesty. For more information, visit: [Academic Honesty Policy](#) or [HSU Catalog](#)

Students with Disabilities: Persons who wish to request disability-related accommodations should contact the Student Disability Resource Center in House 71, 826-4678 (voice) or 826-5392 (TDD). Some accommodations may take up to several weeks to arrange. [Student Disability Resource Center](#)

Add/Drop policy: Students are responsible for knowing the University policy, procedures, and schedule for dropping or adding classes. [Schedule Adjustments \(Adding or Dropping\)](#)

Emergency evacuation: Please review the evacuation plan for the classroom (posted on the orange signs) , and review [Campus Emergency Preparedness](http://studentaffairs.humboldt.edu/emergencyops/campus_emergency_preparedness.php) http://studentaffairs.humboldt.edu/emergencyops/campus_emergency_preparedness.php for information on campus Emergency Procedures. During an emergency, information can be found campus conditions at: 826-INFO or [Emergency Conditions](#)

Attendance and disruptive behavior: Students are responsible for knowing policy regarding attendance and disruptive behavior: [Class Attendance and Disruptive Behavior](#)